

CALIFORNIA DROUGHT UPDATE

JUNE 13, 2022

Current Conditions

- January, February, and March 2022 were the driest on record dating back over 100 years, with just six inches of precipitation observed across the Sierra Nevada.
- California will enter the dry summer months with below-average reservoir storage and with the state's largest reservoir, Shasta Lake, at critically low levels. The Sierra snowpack is essentially gone, and runoff into the state's streams and reservoirs has largely peaked for the year.
- All of California's 58 counties are under a drought emergency proclamation. Californians are being asked to reduce their water use by 15 percent over 2020 levels to protect water reserves and help maintain critical flows for fish and wildlife wherever possible.
- As of June 13, the state's voluntary household dry well reporting system received reports of 120 dry wells in the past 30 days. Twenty-four dry wells were reported in Fresno County, and another 16 in Tulare.

The California Drought Update is a weekly roundup of conditions, state actions and upcoming developments. It is produced by an interagency team that includes the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Public Health. For the latest on drought, please visit www.drought.ca.gov. For tips and resources for conserving water, please visit www.saveourwater.com.

Recent Events and State Actions

State enlists commercial and industrial sector in water conservation efforts in new statewide emergency water conservation regulation (June 10): A new statewide emergency water conservation regulation that requires urban water suppliers to implement all demand-reduction actions under Level 2 of their Water Shortage Contingency Plans went into effect Friday. The new regulation also bans using potable (drinkable) water on decorative or non-functional grass at commercial, industrial, and institutional properties, saving the equivalent of water used by as many as 780,000 households every year. The regulation also applies to turf (mowed grass) that is ornamental and not otherwise used for recreation. It does not apply to residential lawns, school fields, sports fields, or areas regularly used for civic or community events. The regulation does not restrict the watering of non-turf plantings or trees, which are important for shade and cooling as the state experiences more extreme heat events. In the coming weeks, as part of the Save Our Water campaign, the Administration will convene business and corporate leaders to enlist their support to reduce water use and better engage the commercial and institutional sector in long-term efforts toward sustainable water use, particularly in outdoor spaces where thirsty grass consumes water but does not serve a recreational or public health purpose. Replacing turf with native plants and other low-water-use landscaping in these spaces can yield significant and permanent reductions in water use. The new restrictions are in response to Governor Newsom's March 28 Executive Order.

Save Our Water debuts new animated videos in English and Spanish (June 9): The Save Our Water campaign partnered with award-winning cartoonist Lalo Alcaraz to highlight the importance of saving water. Animated videos available in both English and Spanish describe easy ways to save water today so California will have water tomorrow.



Guidelines released for water resilience grant funding (June 9): DWR released the grant program guidelines and proposal solicitation package for approximately \$193 million in grant funding to help local agencies advance water desalination, wastewater treatment, water conservation, groundwater recharge and other resilience projects. Financed by voter-approved Proposition 1, \$167.5 million is available to implement projects that respond to local challenges by improving water supply reliability, reducing fire risk, increasing water storage, and improving water quality while adapting for future challenges caused by climate change and drought. The remaining \$25.5 million is reserved to fund projects that will benefit disadvantaged communities. DWR will deliver the funding through two phases and will require applications for the first phase to be submitted by August 19 of this year and the second phase by February 1, 2023.



Recent Events and State Actions

April water consumption spikes upward (June 7): Average urban water use statewide jumped 17.6 percent compared to April 2020, according to data submitted to the State Water Board by urban water suppliers. Consumption in the Colorado River region increased 40 percent and in the South Coast, home to 55 percent of the state's population, the comparative increase was 25.6 percent. Only the North Coast and North Lahontan regions reduced consumption in April compared to 2020. The cumulative statewide average conservation rate since July 2021 stands at 2 percent.

Russian River voluntary agreement approved (June 7): The State Water Board approved a unique agreement that allows right holders in the Healdsburg and Ukiah areas to voluntarily reduce water use and share their available water. The [Upper Russian River Voluntary Sharing Agreement](#) program protects supplies and enables individuals enrolled in the program who still have water under their water rights to share with other participants who do not, effectively serving as an alternative to curtailments, which are a blanket restriction on water diversions for those with younger rights when there is insufficient water supply. Stakeholders in the watershed had been pursuing an alternative to curtailments since 2020, with the encouragement and support of the State Water Board.

Curtailments adjustments (ongoing): As drought conditions persist, the State Water Board continues to monitor six critical watersheds where worsening conditions may threaten water supplies. Curtailments were expanded to an additional approximately 2,100 water right holders in the [Delta watershed](#) on June 8. Curtailments remain in effect in two [sub-watersheds of the Delta](#) (Mill and Deer Creeks), and in the [Shasta River watershed](#). Based on current conditions and available forecasts, curtailments in the [Russia watershed](#) are temporarily suspended through June 15 and curtailments in the [Scott River watershed](#) are temporarily suspended through June 17. Notices will be sent to water right holders in the Russian River watershed around June 14 regarding a [new curtailment order](#). Board staff will continue to adjust curtailment orders as conditions change.



Tribal / Local Actions

- **Tribal governments:** Tribal emergency drought proclamations as reported by Cal OES to date: Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians, Karuk Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, Tule River Indian Tribe, Yurok Tribe, Wiyot Tribe.
- **Local government:** Local emergency drought proclamations as reported by Cal OES to date: Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Madera, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo.

Upcoming Decisions/Milestones

Kickoff of dam retrofit and marking 120th anniversary of federal agency: At a ceremony at San Luis Reservoir in Merced County on **June 17**, federal and state officials will break ground for a \$100 million seismic improvement of the reservoir's dam and also mark the 120th anniversary of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Congress created the agency in 1902 to bring water to Western desert lands to foster small family farms and communities. San Luis Reservoir is jointly operated by Reclamation and DWR to store water from Northern California rivers. In August 1962, then-President John F. Kennedy visited the site of the future San Luis Reservoir, noting that federal taxpayers were willing to invest in the project because "they realize that if this state does well, so does the United States." Funding to modernize the dam comes from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Workshop on Scott and Shasta watershed instream flows: The State Water Board is tentatively planning to consider readoption of emergency regulations on **June 21** to establish instream flows and curtail unauthorized water diversions in the Scott and Shasta river watersheds. The current emergency regulation expires in August 2022. More information is available at the Board's [Scott and Shasta Drought Website](#).

Key Data Points and Resources

- Daily Hydrological & Climate Information summary: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=DLYHYDRO>
- Statewide water conditions: http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water_cond.html
- Daily Reservoir Storage Summary: <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/reservoir.html>
- Water Year Forecast and Monthly Distribution: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=B120DIST>
- Monthly water supplier reports on water production and conservation: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/conservation_reporting.html
- Latest groundwater conditions and information: <https://sgmatest.water.ca.gov/CalGWLIVE/>
- Information on state drought actions and assistance: <https://www.drought.ca.gov>
- Conservation tips and resources for consumers: <https://saveourwater.com/>